

BAFFLING MYSTERIES

WEIRD! FANTASTIC! ASTOUNDING!


BAFFLING

JULY

10c

No.21

MYSTERIES



WOW! THEY WERE RIGHT!
NOBODY WILL GET THE
NEOLITHIC TREASURE WITH
THAT PREHISTORIC
MONSTER ON GUARD!

HILLORY HOUSE SQUATS ON TOP OF HILLORY HILL AND PROTRUDES FROM THE FLAT HORIZON BEHIND THE OLD CEMETERY LIKE A FESTERING BOIL! THE HILLORYS HAVE OCCUPIED THAT ANCIENT MONSTROSITY FOR AS LONG AS ANYONE CAN RECALL! AND MANY YEARS AGO, HILLORY HOUSE WAS THE CENTER OF TOWN... BUT NOW IT STANDS ALONE ON THE OUTSKIRTS IN FORBIDDING EXILE! THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED ON THE HILL FLED AFTER EVERY FAMILY LOST A LOVED ONE... TO THE MYSTERIOUS CREATURES WHO PROWL THE NIGHT! ONLY THE HILLORYS SUFFERED NO LOSS... AND REMAINED! BUT TO THIS DAY, THERE IS NO PEACE ON THE HILL... AND THE FATHER, MOTHER AND SON LIVING THERE ARE KNOWN THROUOUT THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF THE LAND AS

The HORROR OF HILLORY HILL



NO TO THIS DAY, THOSE WHO DARE VENTURE OUT ALONE IN THE VICINITY OF HILLORY HOUSE AFTER MIDNIGHT, ARE FEW...



AND THOSE FEW, PAY FOR THEIR FOLLY WITH THEIR LIVES...



THE BLACK SHROUD OF NIGHT
CENSORS THE GRISLY NIGHT...
AND ONLY THE VICTIM'S SCREAMS
RIPPING FROM HIS THROAT ARE
EVIDENCE OF THE HORROR THE
VEIL OF DARKNESS CONCEALS...

AAARGH!

BUT WHEN THE FINGERS OF
EARLY MORNING COME POKING
THRU THE CANOPY OF LEAVES...
THEY FIND THE APPALLING
EVIDENCE...



AND SOON THE ENTIRE COUNTRY-
SIDE KNOWS THAT ANOTHER
TOWNSMAN HAS BECOME THE VICTIM
OF...THE HORROR OF HILLORY
HILL...

IT'S JED NOVAK...THE CEMETERY
WATCHMAN! BUT DON'T LOOK...
IT'S AN AWFUL SIGHT!



THAT MEANS ONE OF THOSE
CREATURES WHO PROWL THE
NIGHT DID IT...HOW MUCH
LONGER ARE WE GOING TO
STAND FOR THIS SLAUGHTER?

UNTIL WE FIND OUT
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
FOR THESE ATROCITIES!
WE HAVE NO PROOF
THAT THE HILLORYS
ARE THE ONES.

THE SUN IS HIGH WHEN THE VILLAGERS
BEGIN THEIR SIEGE OF HILLORY HILL!
THEY SCREAM AND YELL, AND THEIR
TORCHES PIMPLE THE HILL WITH A RASH
OF FLAMING BOILS! THEIR CRY ROLLS OVER
THE COUNTRYSIDE LIKE THUNDER SPAWNED
IN HADES...



NO PROOF? ISN'T JED NOVAK'S
BODY PROOF ENOUGH? AND LAST
WEEK IT WAS MARY FORD!
TOMORROW IT'LL BE YOU...OR YOU...
OR ME!

TOM'S
RIGHT!

OF COURSE I'M RIGHT!
AND I SAY GET YOUR
TORCHES AND WE'LL
ALL GO UP TO HILLORY
HILL AND BURN DOWN
THAT ROTTEN DEMON'S
NEST!



INSIDE THE MONSTROUS MANSION, THE MASTER OF HILLORY HOUSE AND HIS WIFE AND SON MATCH WITH GREAT CONCERN AS THE ANGRY SEA OF HUMANITY AND FIRE OVERFLOWS THE TOP OF HILLORY HILL. . .

IT'S THE VILLAGERS, FELIX! DO SOMETHING! THEY'RE COMING TO GET US!

BUT WHY? WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

ONE OF YOU HILLORYS MURDERED JED NOVAK LAST NIGHT. . . AND YOU'RE ALL GOING TO PAY FOR IT BY BURNING ALIVE!

NO! WAIT! YOU'RE WRONG! WE'RE NOT GUILTY! MY SON AND I WERE MILES AWAY LAST NIGHT. . . IN THE CITY! WE CAN PROVE IT!

BUT YOUR WIFE. . . SHE WAS HERE!

MY WIFE'S AN INVALID! YOU ALL KNOW SHE CAN'T WALK!

DON'T LISTEN TO HIS ALIBIS! THROW YOUR TORCHES!

A VOLLEY OF FLAMING FIGOTS EXPLODE FROM THE VENGEFUL MOB AND SLAM AGAINST THE ROTTING SLATS OF HILLORY HOUSE. . .

IT'S STARTING TO BURN. AT LAST WE'LL BE RID OF THE HORROR OF HILLORY HILL. . . AT LAST THERE'LL BE PEACE ON HILLORY HILL!

BUT SUDDENLY THE HEAVENS DARKEN AS IF THE SUN HAD BEEN SNATCHED FROM THE SKY! LIGHTNING STABS THRU THE DARKNESS AND CLAPS OF THUNDER APPLAUD THE SCENE BELOW! THEN THE EARTH IS DRENCHED BY TORRENTS OF RAIN! IS THIS COINCIDENCE. . . OR IS IT THE WORK OF THE HILLORYS?

THIS IS PROOF THAT THE HILLORYS ARE IN LEAGUE WITH THE DEMONS! THEY'VE TURNED DAY INTO NIGHT!

AND THEY'VE SUMMONED THE RAIN TO PUT OUT THE FIRE! THEY ARE DEMONS! RUN! RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!

TERROR DISPERSES THE MOB AND THEY CASCADE DOWN THE HILLSIDE LIKE A HUMAN AVALANCHE! AND INSIDE HILLORY HOUSE, THE MASTER GIVES THANKS...



IF IT WASN'T FOR THAT CLOUDBURST... HILLORY HOUSE WOULD BE A PILLAR OF FLAME NOW!

BUT WE CAN'T ALWAYS DEPEND ON LUCK TO SAVE US, FATHER!

THERE IS A HORROR ON HILLORY HILL... THAT KILLING LAST NIGHT PROVES THAT! YOU OR I COULDN'T HAVE COME IT OAD... WE WERE TOGETHER.

AND I'M A HELPLESS INVALID... SO IT CAN'T BE ANY OF US. BUT IT COULD BE ANY ONE OF THE VILLAGERS!



ACCUSATIONS ARE HURLED BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN THE HILLORYS AND THE VILLAGERS... BUT WORDS CANNOT AND DO NOT STOP THE BRUTAL ATTACKS! DEATH STALKS THE DARKNESS UNSEEN, UNTIL ONE NIGHT THE MASTER OF HILLORY, WHILE RETURNING FROM A MIDNIGHT STROLL, IS SUMMONED TO BE A WITNESS BY A BLOOD-FREEZING SHRIEK...



GREAT SCOTT! SOMEONE IS IN DANGER! THE CRY CAME FROM THE CEMETERY! I MUST HELP!

EEEEEEEEE



IT'S A VIPER! THE HORROR OF HILLORY HILL... ATTACKING A VILLAGER!



ONLY A SILVER BULLET OR A WOODEN STAKE CAN KILL A VAMPIRE! I HAVEN'T MY GUN... BUT I CAN CUT ONE OF THESE BRANCHES WITH MY KNIFE AND MAKE IT INTO A STAKE.

WORKING QUICKLY, FELIX FASHIONS A STAKE... AND PREPARES TO ATTACK THE VAMPIRE.

YES... THIS WILL DO IT. THE POINT IS AS SHARP AS A PRUSSIAN SABER!



BUT SHOCK AND AMAZEMENT ROOT THE MASTER OF HILLORY HOUSE TO THE SPOT AS THE MOON SUDDENLY SPLATTERS THE NIGHT WITH SALLOW LIGHT! FELIX'S EYES BULGE AT THE SIGHT REVEALED TO HIM



GREAT HEAVENS! THE VAMPIRE IS MARTHA... MY WIFE!

MR. HILLORY'S WIFE

FELIX HILLORY FORCES HIMSELF AWAY... AND FLEES FROM THE AWFUL SCENE! HE STAGGERS INTO HILLORY HOUSE AND RELATES WHAT HE HAD SEEN TO HIS SON...

NO... NO! IT CAN'T BE HER! IT CAN'T!

BUT WITH MY OWN EYES I SAW IT, KARL!

HER FANGS SINKING INTO HIS THROAT... DRAINING HIS BLOOD AND— OW-W!

STOP! STOP IT! IT COULDN'T BE HER/SHE CAN'T WALK!

THAT'S WHAT I'D ALWAYS BELIEVED TOO! BUT LOOK... HERE'S HER EMPTY WHEEL CHAIR!



AND LOOK! HERE SHE COMES! SHE CAN'T WALK... BUT SHE CAN FLY... BECAUSE SHE'S A VAMPIRE!

QUICK! LET'S HIDE!

FROM THEIR HIDING PLACE, FATHER AND SON WATCH AS MARTHA HILLORY GLIDES INTO THE ROOM...

THEY SEE HER STAND IN HER UGLY GUISE OF A VICIOUS VAMPIRE...

AND THEN AS QUICKLY AS AN UTTERED CURSE... SHE TRANSFORMS HERSELF INTO A KINDLY, HELPLESS INVALID...

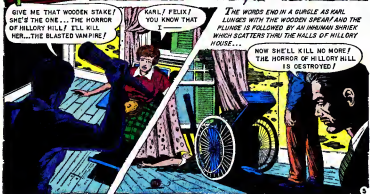


GIVE ME THAT WOODEN STAKE! SHE'S THE ONE... THE HORROR OF HILLORY HILL! I'LL KILL HER... THE BLASTED VAMPIRE!

KARL! FELIX! YOU KNOW THAT I—

THE WORDS END IN A GURGLE AS KARL LUNGES WITH THE WOODEN SPEAR! AND THE PLUNGE IS FOLLOWED BY AN INHUMAN SHRIEK WHICH SCATTERS THRU THE HALLS OF HILLORY HOUSE...

NOW SHE'LL KILL NO MORE! THE HORROR OF HILLORY HILL IS DESTROYED!



ONLY THE BLOATED RATS OF HILLORY HOUSE ARE WITNESSES TO THE FUNERAL OF THE VAMPIRE IN THE DAMP CELLAR OF THE HILLORY MONSTROSITY...

IF WE DID ANY DEEPER, FATHER, WE'LL BE KNOCKING ON THE GATES OF HADES!

IT'S WHAT SHE DESERVES...! BUT TRUE, SON, THE GRAVE IS DEEP ENOUGH... AND I AM WEARY!



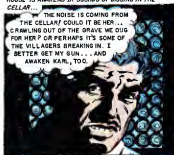
WITHOUT A CASNET, SHE'LL ROT TO OBLIVION IN A MONTH.

THEN WE'LL BE SURE SHE WON'T PROWL THE EARTH AGAIN PREYING ON THE VILLAGERS.



BUT THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, THE MASTER OF HILLORY HOUSE IS AWAKENED BY SOUNDS OF DIGGING IN THE CELLAR...

THE NOISE IS COMING FROM THE CELLAR! COULD IT BE HER... CRAWLING OUT OF THE GRAVE WE DUG FOR HER? OR PERHAPS IT'S SOME OF THE VILLAGERS BREAKING IN. I BETTER GET MY GUN... AND AWAKEN KARL, TOO.



HM-M-H/STRANGE! KARL ISN'T IN HIS ROOM! COULD THAT BE HIM IN THE CELLAR? BUT WHAT WOULD HE BE DOING THERE?



FEAR AND PUZZLEMENT ACCOMPANY FELIX HILLORY INTO THE DISMAL PIT BELOW HILLORY HOUSE...

IT IS KARL... DIGGING! AND THERE'S A BODY ON THE FLOOR... A VILLAGER'S BODY!



KARL! WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?



KARL TURNS... AND WITHOUT SPEAKING A WORD, HIS FATHER'S QUESTION IS ANSWERED...

GREAT SCOTT! YOU... YOU'RE A ZOMBIE!





YOU'VE BEEN KILLING THE VILLAGERS, TOO! BUT NO MORE... NO MORE!

THE BULLETS RIP THRU THE ZOMBIE'S ROTTING FLESH AND HE LAUGHS AT HIS FATHER...

HA / YOU FOOL / NO EARTHLY WEAPON OR BEING CAN HARM A ZOMBIE / ONLY THOSE OF THE SUPER-NATURAL WORLD CAN COMPETE WITH ME!



LIKE THE VAMPIRE DID FOR THE BODIES OF THE VILLAGERS! THAT'S WHY I DROVE THE STAKE INTO HER.

AND THAT IS WHY I'M GOING TO DESTROY YOU!



THE ZOMBIE'S LAUGHTER IS CHOKED BY SHOCK AND TERROR AS HE SEES HIS FATHER MAKE AN AMAZING TRANSFORMATION.

YES, MY SON... I'M A WEREWOLF!

OW-W-W-W!



THE ANCIENT RAFTERS OF HILLORY HOUSE SHAKE WITH THE FURY OF THE BATTLE BETWEEN ZOMBIE AND WEREWOLF AS THEY CLAW AND TEAR AT EACH OTHER IN A DEATH STRUGGLE...



THEY WAGE THEIR WAR OF HATE ALL THRU THE NIGHT... AND SO INTENSE IS THEIR LUST TO DESTROY EACH OTHER, THAT THEY FORGOT THAT THE RAYS OF THE SUN ARE DEATH TO CREATURES WHO PROMT. THE NIGHT!

OW-W! THE— THE SUN! IT—IT IS DESTROYING ME!

AND IT—IT'S TOO LATE TO CHANGE INTO A HUMAN... / ARG-G-G!



THE TWO BODIES DROP TO THE EARTHEN FLOOR AND LIE STILL / AND NOW AT LAST... THERE IS PEACE ON HILLORY HILL!



THE END

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DOOM DANCER

LIONEL, HELP! SAVE ME FROM THESE INHUMAN BEASTS! THEY WILL DANCE ME TO DEATH ON THEIR WALPURGIS NIGHT!

MARIA SANDOW HAD SACRIFICED EVERYTHING TO BECOME A GREAT DANCER. FACED WITH GRINDING POVERTY, SHE HAD NOTHING LEFT BUT VAULTING AMBITION WHICH SERVED AS A GOAD TOWARD FULFILLING HER DESTINY. NOTHING MUST STAND IN HER WAY. NO MATTER WHAT THE PRICE, SHE WOULD PAY IT. TOO LATE SHE REALIZED THAT HER PINNACLE OF FAME COULD ONLY BE REACHED BY A TORTUOUS, HORROR-STREWN PATH ALONG WHICH SHE WOULD WINNIE IN A... DANCE OF DOOM!

MONTHS BEFORE HER BRILLIANT SUCCESS, MARIA SANDOW WAS BEING DROPPED FROM HER CLASS AT THE LASSIE BALLET SCHOOL FOR INABILITY TO PAY TUITION...

I'M SORRY, MISS SANDOW YOU'RE TOO FAR BEHIND WITH YOUR PAYMENTS! WE CAN'T KEEP YOU AT THE SCHOOL ANYMORE! IT'S A PITY, YOU HAVE TALENT!

MAESTRO GREGORY, RIGHT NOW I CAN'T EVEN PAY FOR A PAIR OF SHOES! BUT SOMEDAY I'LL BE FAMOUS! I'LL GET TO THE TOP!

AS MARIA LEFT THE OFFICE, BITING HER LIPS IN BITTERNESS...

AS YOU CAN SEE, LIONEL, I'M THROUGH, WASHED UP! MAESTRO GREGORY WANTS HIS POUND OF FLESH! NO TUITION, NO DANCING!

LISTEN, MARIA, THERE'S A CHORUS GIRL SPOT IN THE SHOW I'M IN! I KNOW IT'S A CHEAP HONKYTONK, BUT YOU CAN EARN ENOUGH TO KEEP GOING! WHAT DO YOU SAY?





THANK YOU, NO! I WON'T WORK IN A TRASHY, STUPID MUSICAL, EVEN IF I HAVE TO STARVE!

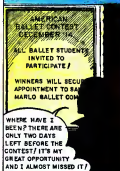
OKAY, MARIA, YOU NEEDN'T GET SO HUFFY! I ONLY MEANT TO HELP / OTHER GREAT BALLET STARS HAVE WORKED IN WORSE PLACES!



YOU DON'T HAVE THE SAME FEELINGS ABOUT BALLET! TO YOU IT'S JUST ANOTHER JOB! TO ME IT'S LIFE / AND SOME DAY YOU'LL SEE MY NAME IN LIGHTS!

I HOPE SO! BUT MARIA, DON'T RUN AWAY! DON'T DO ANYTHING FOOLISH!

MONTHS LATER, WHILE WANDERING THROUGH THE THEATRICAL SECTION OF TOWN, MARIA'S ATTENTION WAS SUDDENLY ARRESTED...



AMERICAN BALLET CONTEST
DECEMBER 14

ALL BALLET STUDENTS
INVITED TO
PARTICIPATE!

WINNERS WILL SECURE
APPOINTMENT TO BAL
MARLO BALLET COM

WHERE HAVE I BEEN? THERE ARE ONLY TWO DAYS LEFT BEFORE THE CONTEST! IT'S MY GREAT OPPORTUNITY AND I ALMOST MISSED IT!

AFTER FILING FOR THE CONTEST, MARIA SUDDENLY REALIZED HER TERRIBLE PREDICAMENT...



ONE DOLLAR AND EIGHTEEN CENTS... NOT ENOUGH TO BUY EVEN ONE BALLET SLIPPER! WHAT SHALL I DO? I MUST DANCE! I MUST! WAIT... MADAME GLUSENKO IS ONE OF THE JUDGES AND I KNOW WHERE SHE LIVES. MAYBE SHE'LL HELP!

GLUSENKO WAS LONG RETIRED FROM THE BALLET WORLD BUT STILL A PATRONESS OF THE ART...



MADAME GLUSENKO, YOU WERE ONCE THE GREATEST BALLERINA OF ALL! YOU LOVED THE DANCE AS I DO! PLEASE HELP ME! I AM POOR! I HAVE NO MONEY FOR SHOES AND THE CONTEST IS TWO DAYS OFF!

COME, MY DEAR, DON'T PLEAD! IF YOU CAN DANCE, I WILL HELP YOU! BUT YOU MUST SHOW ME!

MARIA GAVE WHAT SHE THOUGHT WAS HER GREATEST PERFORMANCE...



WITH A FINAL PIROUETTE MARIA TURNED TO HER AUDIENCE FOR APPROVAL, BUT RECEIVED INSTEAD...



I AM SORRY! YOU HAVE DRIVE, EAGERNESS, AMBITION... BUT LITTLE TALENT! YOU DON'T STAND A CHANCE IN THE CONTEST! I CANNOT HELP YOU!

YOU OLD WITCH! YOU HAVEN'T DANCED IN TWENTY YEARS! YOU'RE PROBABLY HALF-BLIND, OR—OR JEALOUS OF MY YOUTH! I COULD KILL YOU!

SO GREAT WAS MARIA'S RAGE, SHE SCARCELY KNEW HER OWN STRENGTH...



NOOOOOO!
AAAAARRRGH!
DON'T KILL ME! I'LL
GIVE YOU ANYTHING
YOU WANT!

I'VE DEVOTED
EIGHT YEARS OF MY LIFE
TO BALLET, GOME HUNGRY,
DONE WITHOUT CLOTHES...
FOR WHAT? TO BE TOLD
BY AN OLD HAG I'M NOT
WORTHY TO ENTER A
CONTEST? YOU LYING
OLD CRIPPLE!

MARIA'S FURY WAS SUDDENLY STILLED AS HER EYES FIXED ON THE VERY OBJECTS SHE DESIRED...



THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL!
JUST WHAT I NEED! NOW
I DON'T HAVE TO BEG
ANYMORE! I'LL DANCE
WITH THESE AND I
SHALL WIN!

NO, NO, YOU CAN'T
TAKE THEM... (GASP)...
THEY'RE THE ONLY MEMENTO
I HAVE OF MY GREATNESS.
I WARN YOU, YOU'LL DANCE
TO DISASTER IN THEM!
AAAAAAH!!!!!!

GOOD-BYE, MADAME
GLUSENKO! I CAN HEAR THE
DEATH RATTLE IN YOUR
THROAT! YOU WON'T BE
HERE TO WATCH ME
DANCE TO FAME!

YOU LITTLE FOOL! AAARGH!
WEAR THOSE SHOES ONLY ONCE
AND THEY WILL LEAD YOU, JUST
LIKE THEY LED ME... TO THE
VERY GATES OF HELL...!
GAAAAARRRGH!

MARIA WAS GONE BUT GLUSENKO WAS NOT ALONE IN DEATH.



COME, BROTHERS OF WALPURGIS!
WE ARE PALLBEARERS TONIGHT!
HA HA HA!

BUT DID YOU SEE? THE
SHOES DANCE ON! SOON WE WILL
HAVE A NEW MEMBER OF OUR CORPS
DE BALLET... A YOUNG BEAUTIFUL
ONE, TOO! HA HA!

IN THE WINGS, AWAITING HER
ENTRANCE CUE FOR THE CONTEST,
TWO DAYS LATER...



THE SHOES ARE SO TIGHT,
MY TOES ARE CRAMPED. BUT
STRANGELY ENOUGH, EVER SINCE I
PUT THEM ON, I FEEL I CAN SOAR
ACROSS THE WHOLE STATE. MY
BODY FEELS CHANGED. I'M FILLED
WITH EXHILARATION... BUT SO
NERVOUS I COULD SCREAM!

AT LAST MARIA'S TURN CAME AND
SHE DANCED WITH WILD INSPIRATION
AS IF POSSESSED...



MAGNIFICENT!
SHE'S GOT
PAVLOVA'S
GRACE!

SHE SEEMS TO
FLOAT! AAAM,
POOR GLUSENKO!
TOO BAD SHE DID
NOT LIVE TO SEE
THIS!

THE DECISION WAS UNANIMOUS...



YOU WERE SUPERLATIVE, MISS
SANCOW! AND WITH OUR CONGRATU-
LATIONS GOES THE PRIZE OF A
GRAND TOUR OF EUROPE AS FIRST
BALLERINA
WITH THE
SAN MARLO
BALLET!

OH THANK YOU,
THANK YOU! I—I'LL
TRY TO BE WORTHY
OF THE PRIZE YOU
HAVE BESTOWED
ON ME!

WHEN THE HONORS WERE DONE AND MARIA WAS ALONE IN HER DRESSING ROOM . . .

WHA ... ? WHAT IS THAT ? SOMETHING IN THAT SOUND IS TUGGING AT ME, PULLING ME ! I FEEL I MUST GO AT ONCE ! BUT WHY, WHY ?



HASTILY THROWING A COAT OVER HER COSTUME, MARIA LEFT. BUT AT THE STAGE DOOR . . .

MARIA, I WAS IN THE AUDIENCE ! YOU WERE GLORIOUS ! YOU DANCED LIKE A FLAME ! MARIA, YOU'RE NOT LISTENING ! WHERE ARE YOU GOING ?

THANK YOU, LIONEL ! I— I CAN'T STOP NOW ! DON'T ASK ME WHY ! I CAN'T !



BREAKING AWAY, MARIA FOLLOWED THE INSISTENT NOTE TO A SECLUDED SECTION OF A NEARBY PARK . . .

I ANSWERED YOUR CALL. I HAVE COME ! WHO ARE YOU WHO HAS SUCH POWER OVER MY BODY ?



I AM THE CHIEF BROTHER OF THE WALPURGIS... FOLLOWERS OF PAN. TO US THE DANCE HAS BEEN SACRED FOR CENTURIES. YOU HAVE WORN OUR MAGIC SHOES AND NOW YOU ARE OUR STUDENT ! WE WILL MAKE YOU THE GREATEST BALLERINA IN THE WORLD !

YOU ARE ON A GREAT STAGE ! THE MUSIC IS BEGINNING ! TAKE MY HAND AND DANCE ! YOU MUST FEEL EVERY NOTE AND LEARN EVERY STEP WE SHOW YOU !

YES, YES, EVERY NOTE, EVERY STEP ! I HEAR YOU !



AN INVISIBLE ORCHESTRA PLAYED AND MARIA SPUN AND WHIRLED IN MAD ECSTASY . . .

FASTER, FASTER, PAS DE DEUX, PIROUETTE, LEAP, KICK ... HIGHER, HIGHER !

ENOUGH, ENOUGH ! I CAN'T ANYMORE ! IT'S GONE ON FOR HOURS ! WHEN WILL THIS TORTURE STOP ?



AT LAST MARIA COLLAPSED, BUT BEFORE THE ALIEN CREATURES DEPARTED . . .

THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING, MARIA ! WE WILL SEND FOR YOU, PRACTICE WITH YOU UNTIL YOU ARE PERFECT ! FOR TEN YEARS YOU WILL DANCE FOR THE WORLD AS THE GREATEST BALLERINA ... THEN YOU WILL DANCE ONLY FOR US !



WHEN LIONEL, WHO HAD FOLLOWED MARIA AND HAD SEARCHED THE PARK FRANTICALLY, FOUND HER. AT LAST . . .

MARIA, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU ! I LOOKED ALL OVER FOR HOURS !

I—I CAN'T TELL YOU ! I DON'T EVEN KNOW FOR SURE ! IT WAS LIKE A DREAM... A COMPULSIVE, CRAZY DREAM ! OH, LIONEL, DON'T ASK ANYMORE, JUST TAKE ME HOME !



OUTSIDE HER HOUSE...

AND IF YOU EVER NEED HELP, MARIA, I'LL ALWAYS BE AROUND. YOU SEE, I'M ALSO GOING TO BE WITH THE SAN MARLO BALLET, EVEN THOUGH I'LL ONLY BE A POOR MEMBER OF THE CORPS!

IT'S WONDERFUL TO KNOW YOU'LL BE WITH ME! THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR TONIGHT.



QUICKLY MARIA HURRIED WITHIN...



HOW ODD THAT THESE SHOES FIT SO PERFECTLY NOW! AT THE CONTEST I THOUGHT MY TOES WOULD BREAK, BUT AFTER DANCING WITH THOSE... UGH... HORRORS, THE PAINS ALL GONE! MAGIC SHOES HE CALLED THEM...

THEN THE REVOLTING, HORRIBLE TRUTH BURST ON HER SICKENED BRAIN...

AAAAIIIII...! NO WONDER THEY FIT SO PERFECTLY! THEY WERE MADE FOR GLOVEN HOOVES, MADE FOR ONE OF THEM! AND THIS PROVES THEY ARE MY MASTERS AND I BELONG TO THEM! OH, NO NO NO!



SEVERAL WEEKS LATER, IN PARIS, MARIA DANCED TO STARDOM IN HER FIRST MAJOR ROLE...

ALL MY LIFE I DREAMED OF SUCH AN OVA-TION! BUT NOW ALL THE APPLAUSE AND FAME I ACHIEVE ARE A HOLLOW MOCKERY!



AT A DRESSING ROOM PARTY GIVEN IN HER HONOR, MARIA SUDDENLY SHOOK WITH TERROR...

TO OUR MAGNIFICENT BALLERINA, MARIA SANDOW, WHO WILL BECOME AS IMMORTAL AS THE GREAT GLUSENKD!

ON NO! DON'T TRY TO FOLLOW ME! I MUST GO!



MARIA! WHAT'S THE MATTER! WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING TO? WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

SWIFTLY THE EVIL MAGNETISM OF THE HORN DREW HER TO A LONELY CLEARING IN THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE...

YOU ARE LATE! THIS MEANS YOU SHALL HAVE TO PRACTICE LONGER! HURRY, THE MUSIC IS ABOUT TO START!

I—I'M SO TIRED! I CAME AS QUICKLY AS I COULD!



FASTER, FASTER, ARMS UP! FOLLOW THE MUSIC! GET SET FOR YOUR GRAND LEAP!



I... (PANT)... CAN'T ANY-MORE! MY BODY IS NUMB! LET ME DIE! BUT DON'T MAKE ME DANCE ANYMORE!



I... (PANT)... CAN'T ANY-MORE! MY BODY IS NUMB! LET ME DIE! BUT DON'T MAKE ME DANCE ANYMORE!



NOT UNTIL HOURS AFTER THE DEMONIC CREATURES HAD LEFT HER WAS MARIA FOUND . . .



SACRÉ BLEU!
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE,
DRESSED LIKE
THAT? TIENS,
LET ME HELP
YOU!

TAKE ME TO
MY HOTEL
PLEASE, THE
GEORGE
GINO!

AT HER HOTEL, WHERE LIONEL HAD WAITED, FRANTIC WITH FEAR . . .



MARIA, GOOD
HEAVENS! WHERE
HAVE YOU BEEN?
I'VE BEEN OUT
OF MY MIND WITH
WORRY! ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT?

YES... ALL
RIGHT! JUST
GET ME TO MY
ROOM! I'M
TOO
EXHAUSTED
TO SPEAK!



LET ME
HELP YOU OFF
WITH YOUR
SHOES, MARIA!

NOOO, DON'T
TOUCH THEM!
YOU MUSTN'T!
GET OUT! GET
OUT AND
LEAVE ME
ALONE!

THE YEARS PASSED IN RAPID SUCCESSION AND MARIA, ALTERNATELY TORTURED AND CROWNED AS THE TOAST OF EUROPE, BECAME THE GREATEST BALLERINA IN THE WORLD. . .



ON THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF HER TRIUMPHANT DEBUT, MARIA DANCED OPPOSITE LIONEL, WHO HAD RISEN FROM THE RANKS. THE BALLET HAD JUST ENDED WHEN . . .



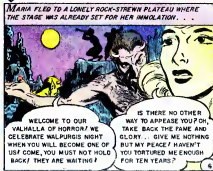
LISTEN, LIONEL! DON'T
YOU HEAR THAT HORN CALL?
MY FLESH CREEPS BUT I
MUST ANSWER IT! TONIGHT
WILL BE MY FINAL
MOMENT OF HORROR!

DON'T SAY
THAT! IT'S
WILD, CRAZY
TALK! I CAN
HEAR NOTHING
BUT THE APPLAUSE
OF THE AUDIENCE!



MARIA,
ARE YOU
MAO? IT'S
NOTHING!
YOU DON'T
HAVE TO
GO!

DON'T FOLLOW ME, LIONEL!
I'M DOOMED! THESE BALLET
SHOES HAVE CURSED ME!
TONIGHT I SHALL BELONG TO
A WORLD OF DARKNESS AND
CREATURES OF DAMNATION.
MARIA SANDOW IS NO MORE!
STAY AWAY FROM ME!



MARIA FLED TO A LONELY ROCK-STREWN PLATEAU WHERE THE STAGE WAS ALREADY SET FOR HER IMMOLATION. . .



WELCOME TO OUR
VALHALLA OF HORROR! WE
CELEBRATE WALPURGIS NIGHT
WHEN YOU WILL BECOME ONE OF
US! COME, YOU MUST NOT HOLD
BACK! THEY ARE WAITING!

IS THERE NO OTHER
WAY TO APPEASE YOU? OH,
TAKE BACK THE FAME AND
GLORY... GIVE ME NOTHING
BUT MY PEACE! HAVEN'T
YOU TORTURED ME ENOUGH
FOR TEN YEARS?

WHEN LIONEL, WHO HAD FOLLOWED, ARRIVED ON THE GRISLY SCENE, THE WILD DANCE WAS IN FULL SWING...

LIONEL, HELP, SAVE ME FROM THESE MONSTERS WHO WANT TO DESTROY ME! HELP! THEY ARE TEARING MY BODY APART!

MARIA... MARIA! I CAN SEE ONLY YOU! THERE IS NO ONE ELSE HERE! IT'S YOUR MIND! YOU'RE SICK! COME TO ME! LET ME HELP YOU!

SUDDENLY MARIA WAS SWEEPED TO THE EDGE OF A PRECIPICE, AND AS SHE TURNED

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU? YOUR FACE? YOUR WHOLE BODY HAS CHANGED! MARIA... YOU— YOU LOOK LIKE A—

GOAT CREATURE? AAAHHH! THEN THE DOOM HAS COME! THEY'VE CHANGED ME INTO A BEAST!

BEFORE LIONEL COULD MOVE HIS PETRIFIED LIMBS...

MARIA, NO! THE WALPURGIS NIGHT IS ENDED! BACK TO DARKNESS AND THE UNDERWORLD, BROTHERS!

WHEN MARIA'S BROKEN BODY WAS RECOVERED AND BROUGHT TO A MORTUARY

IT'S WITCHCRAFT, I TELL YOU! I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH A HIDEOUS TRANSFORMATION. I'VE WATCHED MARIA SADOW GANCE, BUT THIS CREATURE—UGH! IF YOU WEREN'T MY FRIEND, I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT WAS SHE!

JUST THINK OF THE TORTURE SHE WENT THROUGH! NOW I KNOW WHY SHE NEVER LET ME TAKE HER SHOES OFF... I MIGHT HAVE LEARNED THE TRUTH!

VERY STRANGE, THERE'S A TINY FIGURE OF A GOAT ON THE TOES! WHAT DID SHE SAY ABOUT THE SHOES?

THEY WERE CURSED, SHE TOLD ME! LOOK, I CAN'T GET MY HAND IN AT ALL! THEY'D NEVER FIT A NORMAL FOOT... ONLY THE FOOT OF AN UNFORTUNATE CREATURE LIKE MARIA. THEY BELONG IN THE FIRE!

AS LIONEL CAST THEM INTO THE FLAMES...

YIHH, LOOK AT THAT! THERE'S PROOF OF THE HELLISH THINGS MARIA DEALT WITH!

YOU'RE RIGHT! WHAT A HORRIBLE LIFE SHE MUST HAVE LED FOR TEN YEARS!

BUT AS THEY TURNED BACK TO MARIA

A MIRACLE OCCURRED WHILE OUR BACKS WERE TURNED! MARIA'S BEAUTY HAS RETURNED! SHE'S PERFECTLY NORMAL AGAIN.

THEN THE CURSE WAS LIFTED WHEN I THREW THE SHOES INTO THE FIRE! THANK HEAVENS, AT LEAST HER SOUL WILL REST IN PEACE, AND NO ONE ELSE WILL EVER SHARE HER MISERY!

THE END

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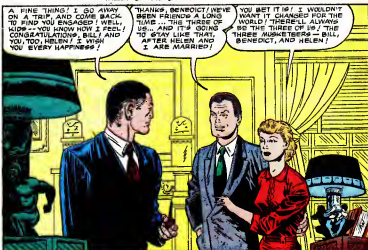
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VALLEY of the MAYAN GODDESS

FRIENDSHIP IS A STRONG CHAIN, BUT WITHIN THE CIRCLE OF THE CHAIN FORMED BY IT, ONE WEAK LINK CAN DESTROY THE STRONGEST TIES! AND WHEN BENEDICT FERRIS LEARNED THAT HIS BEST FRIEND BILL GORDON WAS MARRYING HELEN LAWRENCE, THE JEALOUSY IN HIS HEART RANKELED UNTIL IT BROUGHT BOTH MEN TO THE BRINK OF DOOM, WHEN THEY CAME TO THE "VALLEY OF THE UNKNOWN"!



A FINE THING! I GO AWAY ON A TRIP, AND COME BACK TO FIND YOU ENGAGED! WELL, KIDS-- YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL! CONGRATULATIONS, BILL! AND YOU, TOO, HELEN! I WISH YOU EVERY HAPPINESS!

THANKS, BENEDICT! WE'VE BEEN FRIENDS A LONG TIME... THE THREE OF US... AND IT'S GOING TO STAY LIKE THAT, AFTER HELEN AND I ARE MARRIED!

YOU BET IT IS! I WOULDN'T WANT IT CHANGED FOR THE WORLD! THERE'LL ALWAYS BE THE THREE OF US! THE THREE MUSKETEERS-- BILL, BENEDICT, AND HELEN!

WHEN ARE YOU PLANNING TO GET MARRIED?

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE! WE WERE FIGURING ON THE END OF THE MONTH!



I WISH YOU'D POSTPONE THE WEDDING, BILL! I HAVE DEFINITE WORD THAT THERE'S URANIUM IN THE GUATEMALAN JUNGLE! YOU'RE THE BEST GEOLOGIST ON MY STAFF! WE MUST WORK FAST! YOU KNOW WHAT IT WOULD MEAN IF THIS SOURCE OF URANIUM FELL INTO THE WRONG HANDS!

I CERTAINLY DO! WHEN WOULD WE HAVE TO LEAVE?



WE COULD TAKE OFF BY PLANE IN TWO DAYS! THEN, WE'D SPEND ABOUT A MONTH DOWN IN MAYA, HUNTING FOR THE URANIUM! INCIDENTALLY, THAT SECTION IS PRACTICALLY UNEXPLORED, AND WE MAY COME ACROSS SOME INTERESTING MAYAN RUINS! BUT IT IS VITAL FOR US TO SECURE THE URANIUM!



HELEN, THIS TRIP IS VERY IMPORTANT!



YES, DARLING—IT IS! I'VE WAITED FOR YOU SO LONG NOW THAT ANOTHER FEW WEEKS WON'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE! YOU GO WITH BENEDICT! I'LL BE HERE WHEN YOU GET BACK!

I'LL MISS YOU SO, DARLING!



LET'S GET TO WORK! WE HAVE A LOT OF GROUND TO COVER BEFORE WE GET ROLLING!

A FEW DAYS LATER, BENEDICT AND BILL WERE IN THE OFFICE OF A POLICE OFFICIAL IN A SMALL TOWN BORDERING THE GUATEMALAN JUNGLE...

AH, SEÑORES... YOU ARE ASKING FOR TROUBLE! NONE OF THE PEOPLE HERE WILL WORK FOR YOU IN THE AREA YOU SHOW ME ON THE MAP! FOR THAT IS WHERE THE "VALLEY OF THE UNKNOWN" IS LOCATED!

WHAT IN HELL DOES THAT BLAZE IS THE "VALLEY OF THE UNKNOWN"?



WHO KNOWS? IT IS A GREAT, MYSTERIOUS VALLEY IN THE HEART OF THE JUNGLE! THE LEGEND TELLS US THAT HERE LIVES THE GODDESS OF VENGEANCE, WORSHIPPED BY THE ANCIENT MAYANS! EVERYONE IS AFRAID, SEÑOR!

LISTEN... THE OFFICIALS IN GUATEMALA CITY TOLD YOU OF OUR MISSION! WE NEED PEOPLE TO GO WITH US! AT LEAST A GUIDE!



YES, I KNOW-- BUT THE LEGEND DOES NOT DIE! NO MAN EVER WENT INTO THE "VALLEY OF THE UNKNOWN" WITHOUT MEETING DISASTER! SOME HAVE NOT RETURNED! SOME HAVE BEEN FOUND WANDERING IN THE JUNGLE, OUT OF THEIR MINDS! SO, YOU SEE, THE FEAR IS REAL!



THERE IS NO USE TO ASK THE NATIVES! I WILL GUIDE YOU MYSELF! BUT ONLY UP TO THE ENTRANCE TO THE VALLEY! FROM THERE ON, YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN! FOR I, TOO, BELIEVE THE LEGEND!

ALL RIGHT! I GUESS THAT'S THE BEST WE CAN DO! WE HAVE OUR GEISER COUNTERS, AND IF WE LOCATE THE URANIUM, WE CAN ALWAYS BRING A WORK CREW DOWN FROM GUATEMALA CITY!



THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE THREE MEN HACKED THEIR WAY THROUGH THE DENSE JUNGLE, TOWARD THE VALLEY OF THE UPRIGHT...

GORDON, THIS IS AS FAR AS I WILL GO WITH YOU! THE VALLEY LIES BEYOND THE NEXT RIDGE! I AM NOT A SUPERSTITIOUS MAN, BUT I HAVE SEEN WHAT HAS HAPPENED OUT HERE!

IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE FOOL ENOUGH TO BELIEVE THIS NATIVE MUMBO-JUMBO, I CAN'T FORCE YOU TO GO ON!



WELL, THERE HE GOES! YOU'D NEVER FIGURE TO LOOK AT HIM THAT HE'S SO FULL OF THESE NATIVE FEARS! BUT I GUESS YOU CAN NEVER KNOW WHAT GOES ON IN A MAN'S MIND, EH, BENEDICT?

NO-- YOU CAN'T! COME ON, BILL. LET'S GET TO THE VALLEY! I WANT TO UNLIMBER THE GEIGER COUNTER, AND GET BONY TRYING TO LOCATE THE URANIUM DEPOSIT!



SOON, THEY ARRIVED AT THEIR DESTINATION...

SAY, LOOK AT THOSE RUINS! WE'RE ON THE SITE OF AN ANCIENT MAYAN CITY!

YEAH! I TOLD YOU WE'D GET A CHANCE TO POKE AROUND SOME RUINS! WE'LL MAKE CAMP NOW, BILL, AND GET AN EARLY START IN THE MORNING!



I SAW A STREAM BACK THERE, BENEDICT! I'LL GET THE WATER, IF YOU START A FIRE! WE'LL BREAK OUT SOME OF THE JUNGLE RATIONS! I'M PLENTY HUNGRY!

RIGHT, BILL! I'LL GET A GOOD FIRE GOING!



YOU DON'T KNOW IT YET, BILL GORDON, BUT ONLY ONE OF US IS GOING BACK TO HELEN, AND IT WON'T BE YOU! NOW I HAVE THE CHANCE I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR... TO KILL YOU!



THE NEXT DAY...

I THINK OUR BEST BET IS TO GO DOWN INTO THE VALLEY, BILL! THEN WE CAN WORK OUR WAY UP, AND COVER THE WHOLE AREA WITH THE GEIGER COUNTER!

OKAY! LET'S START DOWN! IT'S PLENTY STEEP ALONG THE SIDES, SO BE CAREFUL! A SLIP HERE COULD BE FATAL!



THIS IS IT, BILL! IN A LITTLE WHILE, YOUR BODY IS GOING TO BE CRUSHED ON THE ROCKS, FAR BELOW... AND NOBODY WILL EVER FIND YOU!



THE MEN CLIMBED DOWN, INTO THE SWIRLING MISTS THAT CAME UP FROM THE BED OF THE VALLEY, UNTIL...

THE FURTHER WE GO DOWN INTO THE VALLEY, THE MORE PUSH, AND FOGGY IT GETS! I WONDER WHERE THAT MIST COMES FROM?



WHA...? BENECKT! NO! NO! AAAAAAAAAH!



FOR ONE WILD INSTANT, THE SHRIEK OF TERROR ECHOED UP FROM THE MIST-SHROUDED VALLEY! THEN, THERE WAS A DEATHLIKE SILENCE, UNBROKEN EXCEPT FOR THE WIND IN THE JUNGLE FOLIAGE...

THE REST WILL BE EASY! I'LL GO TO HELEN AND TELL HER ABOUT THE TERRIBLE "ACCIDENT" THAT KILLED BILL! OH, I'LL BE GRIEF-STRIKEN, ALL RIGHT! AND THEN-- AFTER A WHILE, WE'LL GET MARRIED, AND BILL WILL BE FORGOTTEN!



BUT, AS BENECKT FERRIS STARTED TO CLIMB BACK UP, THE LEDGE BENEATH HIS FEET SUDDENLY CRUMBLLED, AND--



THE LEDGE! NO! NO! I'M FALLING! HELP! HELP!

AS THE GROUND GAVE AWAY BENEATH HIM, BENECKT PLUNGED INTO THE VOID, FOLLOWING THE SAME SCREAMING PATH AS HIS VICTIM! AND THEN, MUCH LATER, HE REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS, TO FIND HIMSELF IN STRANGE SURROUNDINGS...

WHAT IS THIS? WHERE AM I?



IN THE TEMPLE OF TELOPACA-- OUR GODDESS OF VENGEANCE!

THIS IS SOME TRICK! I REMEMBER FALLING! TELL ME-- WHAT HAS HAPPENED? SPEAK, MAN!



YOU ARE IN THE "VALLEY OF THE UNKNOWN"! YOU HAVE TRESPASSED ON THE SACRED PRECINCTS OF OUR LAND! THERE IS NO RETURN FROM HERE! ONLY TELOPACA CAN OBSCURE YOUR FATE!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS! HOW DID I GET HERE? TELL ME THE TRUTH! AM I... DEAD?



ALL THAT CAN BE TOLD IS THAT YOU ARE HERE! YOU HAVE TRANSCENDED TIME AND SPACE... AND YOU MUST FACE THE JUDGMENT OF TELOPACA!





I DON'T BELONG HERE! I GOT RID OF BILL SO I COULD BE FREE TO MARRY HELEN! NOW YOU EXPECT ME TO SWALLOW THIS! I'LL SMASH YOUR STUPID IDOL! I'LL GET OUT OF HERE!

SEIZE HIM! IT IS TIME FOR THE JUDGMENT!



MIGHTY TELORACA, WE SUMMON THEE! DEAL WITH THE INTRUDERS!

STOP! THIS IS MADNESS!

SUDDENLY, AS THE SMOKE AND FLAME CLEARED AWAY, THERE STEPPED FROM THE IDOL, WHICH OPENED, THE BEAUTIFUL GODDESS HERSELF-- THE MAYAN DEITY, TELORACA-- GODDESS OF VENGEANCE!



SILENCE! BRING FORTH THE OTHER ONE FROM THE OUTER WORLD! THE MOMENT OF DECISION HAS ARRIVED! I, TELORACA, HAVE SPOKEN!



MOMENTS LATER...
BILL! YOU! BUT I THOUGHT...

WELL, YOU'RE WRONG! YOU DIDN'T KILL ME! I COULDN'T BELIEVE WHAT YOU DID! AFTER ALL THESE YEARS! WE WERE FRIENDS, BENEDICT... ALMOST LIKE BROTHERS!



I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO ME, BILL! YOU SEE, I LOVE HELEN, TOO! AND WHEN SHE WAS GOING TO MARRY YOU, I WENT WILD!

YOU'RE ROTTEN TO THE CORE! SHE LOVES ME-- NOT YOU! NOW THE TWO OF US ARE HERE, AND THE CHANCES ARE WE'LL NEVER SEE HER AGAIN!



LISTEN, BILL, WE CAN BREAK OUT OF HERE! THEY'RE JUST IGNORANT SAVAGES, AND...

YOU'RE WRONG! YOU'RE FORGETTING THAT THESE PEOPLE ARE THE LAST SURVIVORS OF AN ANCIENT, RICH CIVILIZATION! THEY'RE NOT SAVAGES, NOR ARE THEY IGNORANT! WE'RE DOOMED-- BOTH OF US!



BRING THE OUTLANDERS BEFORE ME, TO THE FOOT OF THE PEDESTAL!

THIS IS MY JUDGMENT! YOU, BILL GORDON, WERE BETRAYED BY YOUR FRIEND, THE ONE CALLED BENEDICT FERRIS! IN THE MAYAN CIVILIZATION, THE BETRAYAL OF A FRIEND IS THE GREATEST CRIME, AND THE PUNISHMENT SHALL BE HARSH!



BILL GORDON SHALL GO FORTH FROM HERE, WITH NO MEMORY OF WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED! HIS LAST RECOLLECTION SHALL BE THAT SOMEHOW, THE LEDGE CRUMBLLED BENEATH HIM, AND HE MANAGED TO MAKE HIS WAY BACK. HE SHALL BELIEVE THAT HIS ONE-TIME FRIEND IS DEAD! LEAD HIM OUT OF THE VALLEY! SO BE IT!



WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH ME? BILL, SAVE ME!



YOUR SHOUTING AND STRUGGLES ARE IN VAIN! HE CANNOT HELP YOU! AND SOON, HE WILL BE BACK WITH THE WOMAN HE LOVES! FOR YOU, I HAVE RESERVED A SPECIAL PUNISHMENT!

NO! NO!



SCREAMING WILDLY, BENEDICT BROKE AWAY FROM HIS GUARDS AND LEAPED AT TELOPACA! HIS GLUTCHING FINGERS FELL SHORT OF HER THROAT, AND TORE THE LOCKET FROM HER NECK, AS A GUARD CLUBBED HIM...

I'LL SHUT YOUR MOUTH! I'LL... OHNNNN!



NO! WHEN HE AWAKENS, HE WILL BE A LOST ONE! LET HIM LIVE! LET HIM SUFFER! AND HE SHALL KEEP THE LOCKET... A REMINDER THAT WILL TAUNT HIM FOREVER!



AS YOU WILL IT, TELOPACA!



A FEW DAYS LATER, BILL WAS ON HIS WAY HOME...

I -- I WISH I COULD REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED MORE CLEARLY! IT'S LIKE A NIGHTMARE -- A HALF-REMEMBERED DREAM! POOR BENEDICT! IT HAPPENED SO QUICKLY!



AND WHEN THE PLANE LANDED, HELEN WAS AT THE AIRPORT TO MEET IT...

DARLING! I'VE BEEN SO WORRIED SINCE I GOT YOUR CABLE! BENEDICT IS...?

...DEAD! THEY SEARCHED FOR HIM, BUT THERE WAS NO TRACE OF THE BODY! I GUESS HE IS SOMEWHERE IN THE VALLEY, COVERED BY THE LEDGE THAT FELL ON HIM!

WE MUST THINK OF HIM AS HE WAS-- SWEET AND GENTLE AND KIND... OUR FRIEND!

THAT'S RIGHT, DARLING!

AND MEANWHILE, SOMEWHERE IN THE DEPTHS OF THE GUATEMALAN JUNGLE...

SEE, THERE, PEPE! A GRINGO! WE MUST HELP HIM! HE HAS THE LOOK OF A LOST ONE IN HIS EYES!

YES! HE COMES FROM THE VALLEY OF THE UNKNOWN! LET US TAKE HIM TO THE VILLAGE, WHERE THE DOCTOR CAN TREAT HIM!

IN THE VILLAGE...

THE GODDESS... THE LOCKET... THE GODDESS... THE LOCKET... BILL... BILL...

POOR MAN! HE IS QUITE MAD! THERE ARE NO PAPERS ON HIM... NO MARKS OF IDENTIFICATION! WE WILL SEND HIM TO THE HOSPITAL! BUT FIRST, I MUST SEE WHAT HE HAS IN HIS HAND!

THE DOCTOR UNCLENCHED THE FIST, AND...

THAT IS A STRANGE LOCKET! I HAVE NEVER SEEN ONE LIKE IT BEFORE!

OH, SEÑOR DOCTOR! I KNOW-- IT IS THE LOCKET THAT IS WORN AROUND THE NECK OF THE GODDESS TELOPACA! IN ANCIENT TIMES, OUR PEOPLE WORSHIPED HER-- SHE WAS THE GODDESS OF VENGEANCE!

THAT'S NONSENSE AND YOU KNOW IT! IT'S SOME USELESS TRINKET! I'VE HEARD THAT STUPID STORY ABOUT THE "VALLEY OF THE UNKNOWN"! SOMEDAY, I AM GOING THERE MYSELF, JUST TO TAKE A LOOK!

NEVER GO THERE, SENOR, OR YOU TOO, WILL BECOME A LOST ONE!

AND SO, BENEDICT FERRIS WAS DOOMED TO LIVE OUT THE REST OF HIS DAYS IN A MENTAL ASYLUM SOMEWHERE IN GUATEMALA, NEVER AGAIN WOULD HE SEE THE TWO FRIENDS WHOM HE HAD TRIED TO BETRAY, THE ONLY TWO PERSONS IN THE WORLD, IRONICALLY ENOUGH, WHO ACQUIRED HIS "DEATH"!

GODDESS... LOCKET... GODDESS... LOCKET... BILL... BILL...

The End

BAFFLING MYSTERIES

#35

IN THE REALM OF THE SUPERNATURAL, NO STRANGER TALE OF HORROR EXISTS THAN THAT OF MARTIN LONDOS, OWNER OF A FAMOUS CARNIVAL THAT TOURED EUROPE IN THE EARLY PART OF THE CENTURY. THE LONDOS CARNIVAL WAS FAMOUS FOR ITS AWESOME COLLECTION OF FREAKS. BUT LONDOS WAS A CRUEL MAN AND WAS ALWAYS TORTURING HIS UNFORTUNATE CREATURES



LONDOS, STOP!
YOU WILL
KILL THEM!

HA HA! JUMP, YOU MISFITS OF NATURE!
DANCE TO THE LASH OF MY WHIP!

THESE CREATURES ARE
HELPLESS. WHY DO
YOU MISTREAT
THEM SO?

SOMETIMES I GET THE
FEELING THAT THEY
ENVY AND HATE ME. IF
GIVEN A CHANCE, THEY WOULD
KILL ME! I MUST KEEP THEM
SERVILE AND CAGED!

AS LONDOS STEPPED INTO THE CAGE, THE CREATURES LEAPED AT HIM WITH HATEFUL REVENGE...

THAT NIGHT AS THE CARNIVAL SLEPT, A COMMOTION IN THE FREAKS' TENT AROUSED LONDOS



SILENCE, YOU BEASTS, OR I'LL COME IN
THERE AND WHIP YOU AGAIN!



AAAAIIIIII!

RRRAAGGHH!

EEEEIEE!

THE CARNIVAL FOLK WERE AWAKENED BY THE SCREAMS FROM THE CAGE. WHEN THEY RUSHED TO LONDOS' AID...



WHAT'S HAPPENED
TO LONDOS?

HIS BODY... HIS
FEATURES...
THEY'VE
CHANGED!

HE HAS BECOME
UGLY AND DEFORMED!

MARTIN LONDOS' MIND AND BODY HAD UNDERGONE A PHENOMENAL CHANGE. THE FREAKS HE NATED SO MUCH HAD IN SOME SUPERNATURAL WAY TRANSFORMED HIM INTO ONE OF THEIR KIND. HE SPENT THE REST OF HIS LIFE ON EXHIBITION AS A FREAK IN HIS OWN CARNIVAL.

THE END



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ARM of VENGEANCE

HE WAS A MASTER OF JUNGLE LORE. NO GUIDE OR HUNTER COULD MATCH THE SKILL AND DARING OF FRANK MELISS. BUT BENEATH HIS DEADLY COLO EXTERIOR LAY A SEETHING MASS OF BRUTE EMOTIONS: CRUELTY, GREED, MURDEROUS JEALOUSY AND TOWERING PRIDE, WHICH ONCE EXPOSED, RAGED WITH DESTRUCTIVE FEVER AGAINST ALL THEY ENCOUNTERED. WHEN FRANK FELL VICTIM TO A HORRIBLE ACCIDENT, HIS VIOLENCE KNEW NO BOUNDS. EVERYONE WHO CROSSED HIS PATH WAS SCATHED UNTIL THE MAD RAMPAGE COULD ONLY BE STOPPED BY... THE ARM OF VENGEANCE.



ENOUGH OF THIS MUMBO-JUMBO, LASHIM! I CAME FOR AN ARM TO REPLACE THE ONE I LOST! I'LL TEAR YOUR ROTTEN HEART OUT IF I DON'T GET IT!

PATIENCE, BRUTAL ONE! EVEN NOW THE MOUNTAIN SPIRIT ANSWERS MY CALL! IT IS FATED THAT YOU SHALL HAVE ANOTHER ARM, ONE THAT SUITS YOUR NATURE!

BEFORE FRANK LOST HIS ARM, HE WAS THE MOST SOUGHT-AFTER GUIDE FOR SAFARIS... IN BECHUANALAND, AS HE LED GAN HARPER, AND HIS WIFE NICOLE, ON A HUNT...

FRANK, FRANK, SAVE HIM!

THE COWARD DESERVES TO DIE... WOUNDING A LION AND RUNNING AWAY! BUT SINCE YOU ASK ME —



WHEN FRANK'S BULLETS HAD DISPOSED OF THE BEAST...

I KNOW YOU DESPISE YOUR HUSBAND, NICOLE! (IT'S ME YOU LOVE, ISN'T IT? ANSWER ME!)

YES, FRANK, I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH YOU! BUT—I'M MARRIED TO DAN! I CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT!



BUT I CAN! ACCIDENTS HAPPEN SOMETIMES ON HUNTING TRIPS! YOUR HUSBAND CAN HAVE ONE AND THEN—NICOLE, I'D KILL FOR YOU!

NO! I'D NEVER AGREE TO ANYTHING LIKE MURDER! SHH... I HEAR HIM COMING!



FRANK, I OWE MY LIFE TO YOU! I'M LUCKY I HIRED YOU AS MY GUIDE! THAT WAS SOME SHOOTING!

YOU COULD HAVE HAD HIM YOURSELF, MR. HANPER, IF YOU HADN'T PANICKED! BETTER STICK TO RABBITS IF YOUR NERVES AREN'T STRONG ENOUGH FOR LIONS!



THAT EVENING WHILE DAN HARPER SLEPT...

LISTEN, NICOLE, IT WOULDN'T HURT HIM A BIT! HE'D GO OUT PAINLESS! I'M MAD ABOUT YOU! I WON'T LET HIM TAKE YOU BACK TO ENGLAND!

NO, FRANK, I DON'T WANT HIS BLOOD ON MY HANDS! THERE MUST BE ANOTHER WAY OUT. WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT!



THE FOLLOWING MORNING, WHILE CROSSING THE CROCODILE INFESTED ZAMBEZI...

THE CROCS ARE COMING AFTER US!



YOU YELLOW DOGS! SIT DOWN, BEFORE I BASH YOUR BRAINS OUT!

BUT THE CANOE WAS TILTED TOO FAR OVER AND...

YIIII, WE'RE FALLING IN!



YOU SWINE, I'LL—

NICOLE WAS FACED WITH THE CHOICE OF SAVING ONE OF THE MEN. SHE WRESTLED WITH HER CONSCIENCE AND THEN FIRED...



NICOLE! NICOLE! SAVE ME!

NICOLE, FIRE! AIM FOR THE HEAD!

DEADLY JAWS CLICKED AND FRANK WENT UNDER...



I CAN'T FIRE! I MIGHT HIT FRANK! IT'S HORRIBLE! BUT I SAVED DAN!

WHEN FRANK WAS RESCUED...

YOU MUST BE
QUIET, FRANK!
I'VE APPLIED A
TOURNICUET!
YOU'LL BE ALL
RIGHT UNTIL
WE REACH THE
HOSPITAL
TOMORROW!

ALL RIGHT? WHAT
GOOD IS A HUNTER
WITH ONE ARM?
YOU LET ME DOWN!
YOU COULD HAVE
SAVED ME, BUT I
WAS SACRIFICED
FOR THAT FAT
FOOL OF A
HUSBAND!



AT A COASTAL HOSPITAL SEVERAL DAYS LATER, WHEN NIGGIE CAME TO VISIT HIM...

SO YOU'VE COME TO
SAY GOOD-BYE! NOW TOUCHING!
YOU COST ME AN ARM AND NOW YOU
LEAVE ME HERE TO ROT! I WISH
I'D NEVER
SET EYES
ON YOU!

I'M SORRY, FRANK...
BUT I HAD TO DO WHAT
I DID! AND I STILL
LOVE YOU! MAYBE
SOMEDAY I'LL COME
BACK!



DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL, FRANK SPENT HIS DAYS IN BITTER BROODING...

IT WON'T DO! I'LL
NEVER TRAIN THIS ARM TO SUB-
STITUTE FOR MY RIGHT! I'M
JUST A MISERABLE CRIPPLE!



ONCE I USED TO BE ABLE TO CATCH A DEER BETWEEN
THE EYES AT TWENTY PACES! NOW I'M SIX
FEET WIDE OF THE MARK!



BUT IN THE BUSHES THE KNIFE HAD FOUND A HIDDEN TARGET...

AAA AII!

W-WHAT'S THAT! I HIT SOMETHING!
A SKULKING BEGGAR HIDDEN THERE,
WAITING TO ROB ME! WHAT LUCK!



SAHIB, SPARE ME! I ADMIT I WAS ABOUT TO ROB YOU...
BUT I CAN RESTORE TO YOU SOMETHING YOU NEVER
DREAMED OF. I KNOW A WIZARD WHO CAN GIVE
YOU BACK YOUR ARM!



KEEP TALKING BEFORE MY
KNIFE FINDS YOUR THROAT/WHO
IS THE WIZARD? SPEAK!

HE IS OVER TWO HUNDRED YEARS OLD.
THE NATIVES CALL HIM LASHIM, THE
VOICE OF THE MOUNTAIN SPIRIT. HE
LIVES ON MOUNT JIBWATA! I
CAN LEAD YOU
THERE, SAHIB!

I KNOW THE
PLACE! I CAN
FIND MY OWN
WAY!



A SARGE STROKE AND THE BEGGAR'S LIFE EBBED AWAY . . .

HAARRREEE! HE MIGHT HAVE LIED TO ME, BUT I MUST TAKE THAT CHANCE. I'VE GOT A HEALTHY RESPECT FOR NATIVE MAGIC... AND THE NAME LASHIM, IS FAMILIAR!

ON THE LONG TREK, FRANK PUSHED HIS NATIVE BEARERS WITH VENOMOUS BRUTALITY...

AAAH!!! I CAN GO NO FARTHER / LET US REST, BWANA! HAVE PITY!

MOVE, MOVE, I CAN'T WAIT / GET ALONG, YOU STUPID ANIMAL!

A LONE SURVIVING BEARER CLIMBED MOUNT JADWATA WITH FRANK, BUT WHEN HE ASKED FOR PAYMENT...

NO, NO, BWANA!

THERE'S YOUR WAGES! HA HA! AND NOW FOR LASHIM!

EE EEE HE'LL GET THE SAME TREATMENT IF HE DOESN'T PRODUCE!

MOMENTS LATER, AS FRANK ENTERED THE CAVE . . .

SO YOU HAVE FOUND MY CAVE, FRANK MELISS! A LONG JOURNEY WITH MANY DEATHS ON THE WAY, AND ALL IN VAIN! I CANNOT GIVE YOU WHAT YOU DESIRE!

WHAAA...? HOW DO YOU KNOW ME? WHY CAN'T YOU GIVE ME ANOTHER ARM? YOU'RE A WIZARD! I WON'T LEAVE UNTIL I GET WHAT I'VE AFTER!

REFUSAL ONLY INCREASED FRANK'S FURY, UNTIL...

YOU CAN'T FRIGHTEN ME! I WON'T LET GO UNTIL YOU USE YOUR CURSED MAGIC FOR MY BENEFIT!

ENOUGH...! AAAAGGH! LET ME GO! I'LL DO AS YOU COMMAND!

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT, HELP ME! GIVE THIS INHUMAN CREATURE WHAT HE DESIRES OR YOUR SERVANT, LASHIM, WILL PERISH! LASHIM AGUUT, YALU, GANNEM ZYBOT-DJANI!

HURRY! I'M LOSING MY PATIENCE! WHERE'S MY ARM!

THE SPIRIT ANSWER CAME WITH VIOLENT SUDDENNESS.

THE MOUNTAIN SPIRIT HAS SPOKEN!

YAAAAEEEE

VRAAAMM

IF FRANK BECAME CONSCIOUS OUTSIDE THE BLASTED CAVE...

I DID IT! I'VE WON!
IT MAY NOT BE A MATE, BUT
IT'S AN ARM, AND A GOOD,
STRONG ONE, TOO!

YES, EVIL ONE, AN
ARM HAS BEEN
GRANTED YOU — THE
ARM OF A BRUTE! IT
MATCHES WHAT YOU
ARE AND IT WILL LEAD
YOU TO YOUR OWN
DESTRUCTION!
HA HA!



CALL ME A GORILLA AND I'LL
ACT LIKE ONE!



A FEW WEEKS LATER, IN A COASTAL TOWN AT THE
LOCAL GUINIES' CLUB...

WANT TO KNOW WHY YOU
CAN'T GET A GUIDE'S JOB?
IT'S YOUR ARM, MELISS!
GIVES EVERYONE THE
CREEPS! THEY SAY YOU
MUST HAVE TRAGED
YOURS WITH A
GORILLA!

YOU, KIRBY, AND ALL THE
OTHER SWINE HAVE
BEEN SPREADING THAT
STORY! I'M GOING TO
SETTLE WITH YOU
RIGHT NOW!



HIS SKULL IS SMASHED!
YOU'VE KILLED HIM,
MELISS! YOU'LL
HANG FOR THIS!

ANYONE WANT TO TRY TO
TURN ME IN? HE'LL GET
THE SAME TREATMENT
KIRBY GOT!



BUT FRANK KNEW HE'D BE HUNTED LIKE
AN ANIMAL, AND HE SOUGHT REFUGE...

WHO'S THERE? WHY
ARE YOU MAKING
THAT AWFUL
CLATTER THIS
TIME OF THE
NIGHT?

HUGO, IT'S ME,
FRANK MELISS!
FOR HEAVEN'S
SAKE, GET DOWN
HERE AND LET
ME IN!



HUGO, YOU'VE GOT
TO HIDE ME OUT
FOR A FEW DAYS!
I-I'M IN A JAM!
I WAS IN A
FIGHT AND
HURT
SOMEONE!

WELL... THIS
ISN'T THE
FIRST TIME
THAT CRAZY
TEMPER GOT
THE BEST OF
YOU! GET UP TO
THE ATTIC! YOU'LL
BE SAFE THERE!



ON THE FOLLOWING DAY, FRANK
WAS INTERRUPTED WHILE PLANNING
AN ESCAPE ROUTE...

W-WHO IS
IT?

IT'S ME...
HUGO! LET ME IN!
I'VE GOT NEWS!



I FOUND OUT THAT YOU KILLED KIRBY / I WON'T HARBOR A MURDERER IN MY HOUSE / YOU'LL HAVE TO CLEAR OUT TONIGHT WITH THAT HORRIBLE ARM!

I DON'T TRUST YOU, HUGO! YOU MAY BE GOING TO THE POLICE RIGHT NOW / YOU'RE NOT LEAVING THIS ATTIC!



WHEN FRANK FLUNG OUT HIS ARM TO PREVENT HUGO'S DEPARTURE...

YOU'RE STAYING RIGHT HERE WITH — AAAARRRR, MY ARM / IT—IT'S BECOME A SNAKE... A PYTHON!

YH! / THE COILS ARE STRANGLING ME / YOU'RE A FIEND, MELISS, A... (GASP)... BEAST!



AS HUGO SANK TO THE FLOOR, A NEW TERROR MANIFESTED ITSELF. . .

FRANK MELISS, YOU'VE BEEN CURSED! FIRST THE MOUNTAIN SPIRIT GAVE YOU THE ARM OF A GORILLA, FOR THE BRUTE, STUPID STRENGTH YOU WORSHIPPED! AND NOW YOUR VILE TREACHERY AGAINST A FRIEND HAS EARNED YOU A SNAKE-ARM!



YOU TRICKED ME... BUT I'LL ESCAPE THIS CURSE AND MAKE A NEW LIFE FOR MYSELF!

FRANK WAS A MARKED MAN, BUT HE NEEDED MONEY TO EFFECT AN ESCAPE...

THERE'S A LOAD OF JEWELS HERE THAT WILL BUY PASSAGE ON A SHIP! I'LL GO TO EUROPE AND GET LOST! NO ONE WILL EVER FIND ME!



I'VE GOT ENOUGH TO LAST ME THE REST OF MY — AAAA! POLICE!

HEY, YOU'VE BROKEN IN, YOU THEF / YOU'RE THAT KILLER / STAY WHERE YOU ARE BEFORE I BASH YOUR HEAD IN!



WITH LIGHTNING SPEED, FRANK STRUCK, BUT NOT WITH THE COILS OF A PYTHON. . .

THE POLICE WON'T STOP ME! I'LL USE THE CURSE I BEAR TO MY OWN ADVANTAGE!



FLEEING DOWN DARK ALLEYS, FRANK HAD A GRIM PURSUE.

LEAVE ME ALONE, YOU UGLY DEVIL / WHY DID YOU GIVE ME THIS VULTURE'S CLAW FOR AN ARM?

IT WAS MEANT FOR ONE WITH THE SAME BREED AS THE BIRD WHICH DEVOURS THE DEAD. YOU HAVE THE HEART OF THE VULTURE / WHERE WILL YOU GO NOW, HUNTED ONE? THERE IS NO ESCAPE!



THERE'S ONE HIDING PLACE FOR ME... THE JUNGLE! NOBODY KNOWS THE JUNGLE LIKE FRANK MELISS! I'LL BE SAFE THERE!

THERE IS NOT A TREE OR BUSH THAT WOULD HIDE A VULTURE! THEY WILL TRAP YOU, HA HA HA!

SOMEHOW THE OLD CUNNING WAS GONE. FEAR CLUTCHED FRANK'S HEART AND EACH SOUND MADE HIS NERVES VIBRATE IN TERROR.

THE POLICE MUST BE ALL AROUND! I HEAR THEIR FOOTSTEPS! I CAN'T KNOW WHERE I'M GOING OR WHERE I CAN HIDE! ALL MY SKILL IS GONE!

CRAWLING TO ESCAPE DETECTION, FRANK SUDDENLY STRUCK METAL AND BEFORE HE COULD PULL BACK.

A TRAP...! AAAAIIII, I'M CAUGHT!

NOW YOUR ARM REFLECTS YOUR TRUE NATURE, THE ONE THAT UNDERLIES THE BRUTE! THE LEG OF A JACKAL—THE COWARD OF ALL BEASTS... FOR INDEED YOU ARE A ROTTEN COWARD IN YOUR HEART.

FRANK'S TERRIFIED CRIES BROUGHT THE POLICE.

LOOK AT THAT ARM OF HIS! IT'S THE LEG OF A JACKAL! HE'S THAT KILLER ALL RIGHT, BUT HOW IN THE DEVIL DOES HIS UGLY ARM KEEP CHANGING?

I DUNNO, AVERY, BUT WE'LL HAVE TO AMPUTATE, HERE AND NOW! IT LOOKS LIKE HE'LL SWING WITH ONE ARM WHICH DON'T EVEN BELONG TO HIM!

WEEKS PASSED WHILE FRANK'S STUMP MENDED. FINALLY SENTENCE CAME AND THE DAY OF EXECUTION ARRIVED.

HERE! YOU CAN'T DO THAT! IT'S AN EXECUTION!

FRANK! FRANK! IT'S NICOLE! I'VE JUST COME BACK!

AS SOON AS MY HUSBAND DIED, I BOOKED PASSAGE TO RETURN! OH FRANK! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE? WHY DIDN'T YOU WAIT FOR ME!

IT'S TOO LATE, NICOLE! I'VE BEEN CURSED FOR ALL TIME! IT'S TOO LATE FOR ANYTHING NOW BUT THE NOOSE!

AS THE NOOSE CLOSED, BREAKING FRANK'S NECK.

THE DEVIL'S TAKEN PART IN THIS EXECUTION! LOOK AT HIM! THAT JACKAL'S LEG IS GONE! HE'S ONLY GOT TWO STUMPS NOW!

THUS HAS THE MOUNTAIN SPIRIT FATED IT! THE CURSE HE BORE HAS BEEN REMOVED. ARMLESS, HE ENTERS HIS PRIVATE HELL!

THE END

BAFFLING MYSTERIES

#36

FROM THE AREA AROUND THE GULF OF MEXICO CAME A WEIRD TALE OF TWO FISHERMEN UNEQUALLED IN THE ANNALS OF THE SUPERNATURAL. THE TWO WERE PARTNERS IN A FISHING BOAT THAT SAILED THE GULF ONE STORMY NIGHT. ON DECK, THE PARTNERS FACED EACH OTHER IN A BITTER ARGUMENT THAT WAS TO LEAD TO DEATH FOR ONE . . .



I WILL NOT SELL YOU MY SHARE IN THIS BOAT! YOU CAN NOT FORCE ME TO, TINO!

THEN I MUST KILL YOU, VALDEZ!

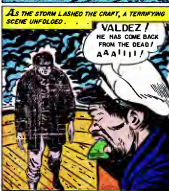


THE ON OF THE STORM DROWNED OUT THE SCREAMS OF VALDEZ AS HE WAS HURLED INTO THE TURBULENT WATERS.

VALDEZ'S DEATH WAS WRITTEN OFF AS AN ACCIDENT AND TINO BECAME SOLE OWNER OF THE BOAT. MONTHS LATER, HE WAS FISHING IN THE GULF.



WE ARE NEARING THE WATERS WHERE I KILLED VALDEZ! WHA... A STORM IS COMING UP! BUT THERE WAS NO SIGN OR WARNING.



AS THE STORM LASHED THE CRAFT, A TERRIFYING SCENE UNFOLDED.

VALDEZ!
HE HAS COME BACK FROM THE DEAD!
AAAAIIIIII!

SUDDENLY THE STORM ABATED AND TINO WAS GONE! THE CREW, BELIEVING HE WAS SWEEPED OVERBOARD IN THE STORM LIKE HIS PARTNER, BEGAN GATHERING IN THEIR NETS! AS THE NETS WERE HAULED UP



DIABLO! LOOK!
IT IS TINO! HE IS DEAD!

THERE IS ANOTHER BODY IN THE NET WITH HIM! IT IS VALDEZ!!

IN A SECRET QUAY THAT TINO LEFT BEHIND, THE POLICE FOUND THE TRUTH ABOUT THE MURDER OF VALDEZ! BUT STILL PUZZLING THE AUTHORITIES IS THE APPEARANCE OF THE BOAT OF A MAN DEAD MANY MONTHS! WHAT EERIE POWER FROM THE BEYOND REACHED INTO REALITY TO CLAIM VENGEANCE ON A KILLER?

THE
END



Mrs. Ruth Long

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